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## FBI Director Wray defends the 'real FBI' against criticism

By FARNOUSH AMIRI, ERIC TUCKER and LISA MASCARO  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — FBI Director Chris Wray defended the “real FBI” during a contentious congressional hearing Wednesday, rejecting a litany of grievances from angry Republicans who are harshly critical of the bureau, threatening to defund some operations and claiming the Justice Department is unfair to political conservatives, including Donald Trump. Wray refused to engage in specific questions about ongoing federal investigations, including those involving former President Trump and Hunter Biden. The son of President Joe Biden recently reached an agreement to plead guilty to misdemeanor federal tax charges; Republicans have derided that as a sweetheart deal. In testy exchanges with Republicans on the House Judiciary Committee, Wray rejected the GOP assertion that the bureau was favoring the Biden family and said the notion that the bureau was involved the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol was “ludicrous.” Referring to his own background, he said the idea that he harbors bias against conservatives is “insane.”

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FBI Director Christopher Wray is sworn in before testifying at a House Committee on the Judiciary oversight hearing, Wednesday, July 12, 2023, on Capitol Hill in Washington.

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## FBI Director Wray defends the 'real FBI' against criticism

Continued from Front

"The work the men and women of the FBI do to protect the American people goes way beyond one or two investigations that seem to capture all the headlines," said Wray, a registered Republican whom Trump nominated to lead the FBI after firing James Comey in 2017.

The director spelled out the bureau's crime-fighting work breaking up drug cartels, taking some 60 suspected criminals off the streets each day and protecting Americans from "a staggering array of threats."

He said, "That is the real FBI."

It's the latest display of the new normal on Capitol Hill, where Republicans who have long billed themselves as the champions of police and "law and order" are deeply at odds with federal law enforcement and the FBI, accusing the bureau of bias dating to investigations of Trump when he was president.

This new dynamic has forced Democrats into a position of defending law enforcement agencies they have long criticized. Wray testified for nearly six hours.

The committee chairman, Republican Rep. Jim Jordan of Ohio, said he is trying to stop what Republicans call the "weaponization" of the federal justice system, which they say is tilted against conservatives, including Trump and his allies. Jordan opened the hearing reciting a federal judge's recent ruling against the government's efforts to halt misinformation on social media and listed other grievances over the FBI's treatment of conservatives. But the top Democrat on



**Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, chair of the House Committee on the Judiciary, speaks during an oversight hearing with FBI Director Christopher Wray, Wednesday, July 12, 2023, on Capitol Hill in Washington.**

Associated Press

the committee, Rep. Jerrold Nadler of New York, said the hearing was "little more than performance art" by Republicans who are undertaking what he called baseless investigations too far-fetched to be true.

Wray generally steered clear of answering questions about the Justice Department's prosecution of Trump. The former president has pleaded not guilty to 37 felony counts over his mishandling of classified information at his Mar-a-Lago club and residence.

Wray did say that classified documents are required to be stored in what's known as a "sensitive compartmented information facility," or SCIF.

"In my experience," he said, "ballrooms, bathrooms and bedrooms are not SCIFs."

A separate Justice Department investigation is probing efforts by Trump and his allies to undo Biden's election in the run-up to Jan. 6, 2021.

During one tense exchange with Rep. Matt Gaetz, R-Fla., Wray noted that

in Florida, the number of FBI applicants is up by more than 100%.

"We're deeply proud of them, and they deserve better than you," Gaetz said.

Typically measured, Wray became animated by the suggestion from Rep. Mike Johnson, R-La., that the FBI would have been involved in suppressing a theory that the coronavirus pandemic originated via a leak from a laboratory in China rather than a transfer from animals to humans.

"The idea that the FBI would somehow be involved in suppressing references to a lab leak theory is somewhat absurd when you consider the fact that the FBI was the only — the only — agency in the entire intelligence community to reach the assessment that it was more likely than not that was the explanation of the pandemic," Wray said, pointing for emphasis. He later noted the Energy Department's intelligence arm reached a similar finding.

Rep. Zoe Lofgren, D-Calif., said she thought it was "ac-

tually sad that the majority is engaging conspiracy theories in an effort to discredit one of the premier law enforcement agencies in the United States."

Jordan has been laying the groundwork for Wray's appearance since House Republicans took the majority in January.

Republicans have held hearings with former FBI agents, Twitter executives and federal officials to make the case that the FBI has been corruptly using its powers against Trump and the right. The GOP has formed a special committee on "weaponization" of government, also led by Jordan, to investigate abuse. Three panels opened a joint investigation into the Hunter Biden case, and one announced Wednesday that the two IRS whistleblowers who claimed Justice improperly interfered in the case will appear before Congress next week.

Hanging over the proceedings are GOP threats to impeach Attorney General Merrick Garland and withhold money for federal law enforcement as Congress is in the midst of preparing annual spending bills. House Speaker Kevin McCarthy has signaled he is open to impeachment and wants to rethink FBI spending on a new headquarters. At one point, Rep. Thomas Massie showed a short surveillance video of the moments before officials found a pipe bomb outside the Democratic National Committee's Capitol Hill headquarters on the day of the Jan. 6, 2021, attack. Massie, R-Ky., demanded answers about the investigation, which is ongoing.

"We fund your department so you need to provide that," Massie said.

Republican criticisms of the

FBI stretch back years, but became more prominent during the Trump-Russia investigation, when the Justice Department probed interference in the 2016 election.

One focus of Wednesday's hearing was the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, or FISA, that grants the FBI and other agencies broad powers to surveil the communications of foreigners outside the United States. A provision known as Section 702 is set to expire unless Congress agrees to renew it. Members of both parties are frustrated with the program.

Underscoring the extent to which surveillance errors during the Trump-Russia investigation continue to shadow the FBI, Rep. Tom Tiffany, R-Wis., said he will be allowing FISA to "sunset" if there are no reforms.

Wray, meanwhile, acknowledged a difference over Garland's 2021 memo instructing the FBI to coordinate with local law enforcement over threats against school boards. Republicans have complained that went too far in trying to police parents.

"I will say to you the same thing that I said to all 56 of our field offices as soon as I read the memo, which is that the FBI is not in the business of investigating or policing speech at school board meetings or anywhere else for that matter," said Wray.

Some of the GOP's most conservative members are pushing to cut off some funding for the FBI. McCarthy, R-Calif., has questioned spending money to build a new FBI headquarters out of downtown and in a Washington suburb. He has said Congress should focus on FBI offices in the states. □



## Few U.S. adults support full abortion bans an AP-NORC poll finds

By GEOFF MULVIHILL and LINLEY SANDERS  
Associated Press

The majority of U.S. adults, including those living in states with the strictest limits on abortion, want it to be legal at least through the initial stages of pregnancy, a new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research finds.

The poll was conducted in late June, one year after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, undoing a nationwide right to abortion that had been in place for nearly 50 years. It comes as state lawmakers in Republican-led states have moved to drastically limit abortion access and as GOP presidential candidates wrestle with how to approach the issue.

While the laws have changed over the past year, the poll found that opinions on abortion remain much as they were a year ago: complex, with most people believing abortion should be allowed in some circumstances and not in others. Overall, about two-thirds of Americans say abortion should generally be legal, but only about a



Kinga Gebauer holds a sign in front of the Walgreens corporate headquarters during a protest over plan to sell abortion pills Walgreens Deerfield Headquarters in Deerfield, Ill., Tuesday, Feb. 14, 2023.

Associated Press

quarter say it should always be legal and only about 1 in 10 say it should always be illegal. By 24 weeks of pregnancy, most Americans think their state should generally not allow abortions. That's true for 34-year-old Jaleesha Thomas, of Chicago. "I'd rather the person abort the baby than harm the baby or throw the

baby out or anything," she said in an interview. But she said that around 20 weeks into pregnancy, she thinks abortion should not usually be an option. "When they're fully developed and the mother doesn't have any illnesses or anything that would cause the baby or her to pass away, it's like you're killing another

human," she said.

Thomas' state allows abortion until the fetus would be viable, generally considered to be around 24 weeks, and has become a destination for people from neighboring Kentucky, Missouri, Wisconsin and other places with travel bans for abortions.

The poll finds that 1 in 10

Americans say they know someone who has either been unable to get an abortion or who has had to travel to get one in the last year, since the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* and that this is especially common among young people, people of color and those living in states where abortion is banned at all stages of pregnancy.

Nearly half the states now allow abortion until between 20 and 27 weeks but bar it later than that in most cases. Before the end of *Roe*, almost every state fell in that range. Now, abortion is banned with varying exceptions at all stages of pregnancy in 14 states, including much of the South. The poll found that 73% of all U.S. adults, including 58% of those in states with the strictest bans, believe abortion should be allowed at six weeks of pregnancy. Just one state currently has a ban in effect that kicks in around then. That's Georgia, where abortion is banned once cardiac activity can be detected around six weeks and before women often know they're pregnant. □

## Steve Bannon ordered to pay nearly \$500K in unpaid legal bills

By JAKE OFFENHARTZ  
Associated Press

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Steve Bannon must pay nearly \$500,000 in outstanding legal fees to his former attorneys, a New York judge ruled.

Bannon, a longtime ally of former President Donald Trump and far-right strategist, was sued earlier this year for allegedly stiffing the Manhattan law firm that has defended him against a cascade of legal troubles in recent years.

In her six-page order released this week, Judge Arlene Bluth found that Bannon paid just \$375,000 of more than \$850,000 in legal fees he owed to Davidoff, Hutcher & Citron LLP.

He was ordered to pay the

balance of \$480,487, along with 1% interest and "reasonable legal fees."

In a statement, Bannon's current attorney, Harlan Protass, said his client plans

to appeal the "clearly wrong" decision.

Jeffrey Citron, a managing partner at Davidoff, Hutcher & Citron, said it was unfortunate that Ban-

non forced the firm to take legal action despite receiving "excellent representation." "The firm intends to pursue every opportunity to collect our fees," Citron added.

The New York firm represented Bannon in multiple legal matters, including the federal investigation into charges that he duped donors who contributed money to build a wall along the U.S. Southern Border.

Bannon was pardoned by former President Donald Trump in that case, but he currently faces state charges for his role in the scheme. He is expected to stand trial in that case next year.

He also received legal help from the firm in his effort to fight a subpoena by the

congressional committee investigating the Jan. 6th attack on the U.S. Capitol. He was sentenced to four months in prison for defying the subpoena, but he remains free while he awaits a decision on an appeal. Bannon argued that he told the firm's attorneys to stop working for him in early 2022, months before he stopped paying his bills. He also claimed that the firm did not properly alert him of the payments by failing to send the invoices to his various addresses.

The judge rejected both arguments, writing that Bannon "cannot receive the benefit of plaintiff's legal representation and then insist he need not pay for it." □



Steve Bannon, center, appears in Manhattan Supreme Court, May 25, 2023, in New York.

Associated Press



## 3 dead, 14 hurt after Greyhound bus strikes semis in Illinois

**By The Associated Press**  
**HIGHLAND, Ill. (AP)** — A Greyhound passenger bus crashed into three tractor-trailers parked along a highway exit to a rest area early Wednesday in southern Illinois, killing three people and injuring 14 others, some seriously, state police said.

The St. Louis-bound bus was traveling westbound along Interstate 70 in Madison County around 1:55 a.m. when it crashed into the three semis, Illinois State Police said, citing an initial investigation.

Four people were taken to the hospital by helicopter and at least 10 others were taken by ambulance, state police said in a news release.

Police did not immediately release details about those who were injured and killed.

No one in the three trucks was injured in the crash near the city of Highland about 25 miles (40 kilometers) east of St. Louis, police said.

State Police spokesperson Melaney Arnold said those killed and injured were all on the Greyhound bus. She



**A damaged Greyhound bus is prepared for transport on Wednesday, July 12, 2023, from the scene of a fatal wreck on westbound Interstate 70 after the bus collided with a tractor-trailer near Highland, Ill.**

was not sure if the bus driver was among those killed or injured or if all of those involved were passengers. The crash closed westbound traffic on I-70.

The National Transportation Safety Board will send a team to investigate the crash, the agency said. U.S. Rep. Mike Bost, an Illinois Republican, said an NTSB official told him the bus was equipped with monitor-

ing cameras "so they'll be able to do a full check to see how the accident occurred."

Photos and TV footage show the side of the bus peeled open, the roof crumpled. A second tractor-trailer appears to have made contact with the right rear of the bus while a third tractor-trailer appears to have crashed into the rear of that second semi.

Passenger Edward Alexander of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, told the St. Louis Post-Dispatch he helped a pregnant woman get off the bus and was searching for his phone when he "realized smoke was coming in the bus. I was like, 'forget that phone,' and went on and jumped out the window."

Greyhound spokesperson Mike Ogulnick said in an

email that the bus was traveling from Indianapolis to St. Louis, where it was scheduled to arrive at about 2:20 a.m. It was carrying about 30 people, including the driver, he said.

"Our primary concern is ensuring we care for our passengers and driver at this time," Ogulnick said. "We are working closely with local authorities and a relief bus is on the way for passengers."

Another bus was sent to transport passengers who were not hurt, Ogulnick said.

It is illegal in Illinois for trucks to park on exit ramps. But trucking industry experts say semis often stop there for the night because overnight parking is hard to find at rest stops and other places, such as truck stops. "And that's not only dangerous for them but it's dangerous for the motoring public because they do need their rest and they deserve their rest," Lewis Pugh of the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association said at a May hearing before a House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure subcommittee. □

**Associated Press**

## Phoenix officials ask judge for more time in clearing downtown camp of homeless people

**PHOENIX (AP)** — Phoenix city officials said Tuesday they have been slowly and steadily clearing hundreds of people from a downtown

encampment of homeless people called "The Zone," and they asked a judge for more time to clear out the remaining hundreds still liv-

ing there.

About a year ago, as many as 1,000 people lived in the tent city that exploded in size during the COVID-19 pandemic. City officials say up to 300 people have since left the site under efforts launched in late 2022 to get them into shelters, or into temporary or permanent housing. Area shelters are typically full.

Representing Phoenix, attorney Justin Pierce told Judge Scott Blaney that much progress has been made since March, when the court ordered Phoenix to lessen the public nuisance the encampment created.

Deputy City Manager Gina Montes testified that

Phoenix has now identified a property for a structured camping site with bathrooms and showers for those without housing, which it hopes to open by summer's end.

Attorneys for area business owners and residents said the city is taking too long and is not doing enough. Blaney said he would issue a decision within 60 days and asked both sides to file their findings and conclusions with the court on Aug. 11.

This civil suit is one of two facing Phoenix.

Like several other major cities, Phoenix has been challenged to balance the concerns of businesses and homeowners with the

rights of homeless people. The U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in 2019 that homeless people cannot be criminalized for sleeping outside if no alternatives exist.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Arizona argued in a federal lawsuit that the city is violating the constitutional rights of unhoused people by slowly clearing the area. However, U.S. District Court Judge G. Murray Snow declined the ACLU's request in May to declare Phoenix in contempt of a ruling he issued in December and said he would not bar the city from further cleanups at the encampment site pending another hearing. □



**A large homeless encampment is shown in Phoenix, on Aug. 5, 2020.**

**Associated Press**



## 3.3B people live in countries that spend more on debt interest than education

By EDITH M. LEDERER

Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) —

Some 3.3 billion people — almost half of humanity now live in countries that spend more money paying interest on their debts than on education or health, according to a new U.N. report released Wednesday. U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told a press conference launching the report that because this “crushing debt crisis” is concentrated mostly in poor developing countries, it is “not judged to pose a systemic risk to the global financial system.”

“This is a mirage,” the U.N. chief warned. “3.3 billion people is more than a systemic risk, it is a systemic failure.” Guterres said financial markets may seem not to be suffering yet but billions of people are and the levels of public debt “are staggering and surging.”

“In 2022, global public debt reached a record \$92 trillion and developing countries shoulder a disproportionate amount,” he said. According to the report, the number of countries facing high debt levels has



A public school student attends a math class on the first day back to school after the Christmas holiday, in the Cota 905 neighborhood of Caracas, Venezuela, on Jan. 12, 2022.

Associated Press

increased sharply from 22 nations in 2011 to 59 in 2022. The secretary-general said a growing share of debt is held by private creditors who charge sky-high interest rates to developing countries. As an example, he cited African countries that on average pay four times more for borrowing than the United States and eight times more than the wealthiest European coun-

tries.

The debt crisis is leaving governments with no money to invest in lagging U.N. development goals for 2030 that include ending extreme poverty; ensuring that every child has a good-quality primary and secondary school education, and to invest in transitioning to renewable energy, he said.

The report says public debt

has reached “colossal levels” largely due to two factors: First, countries’ financial needs soared as they tried to fend off the impact of cascading crises including the COVID-19 pandemic, the rising cost of living and climate change, and second, the global financial architecture “makes developing countries’ access to financing inadequate and expensive.” □

## U.N. rights body calls for more action to combat religious hatred

GENEVA (AP) — The U.N.’s top human rights body overwhelmingly approved a measure calling on countries to do more to prevent religious hatred in the wake of Quran burnings in Europe, over the objections of Western countries who fear tougher steps by governments could trample freedom of expression.

Applause broke out in the cavernous chamber of the Human Rights Council on Wednesday after the 28-12 vote, with seven abstentions, on a measure brought by Pakistan and Palestine that was backed by many developing countries in Africa, as well as China and India, and Middle

Eastern countries.

The resolution comes in the wake of recent Quran burnings in parts of Europe, and among other things, calls

on countries to take steps to “prevent and prosecute acts and advocacy of religious hatred that constitute incitement to discrimina-

tion, hostility or violence.”

After the vote, Ambassador Khalil Hashmi of Pakistan insisted the measure “does not seek to curtail the right to free speech,” but tries to strike a “prudent balance” between it and “special duties and responsibilities.”

“The opposition of a few in the room has emanated from their unwillingness to condemn the public desecration of the Holy Quran or any other religious book,” Hashmi said.

“They lack political, legal and moral courage to condemn this act, and it was the minimum that the council could have expected from them.” □



A woman holds up a Quran during a protest outside the Swedish consulate in Istanbul, Turkey, on Jan. 22, 2023.

Associated Press

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# Iran's leader, visiting Africa, attacks Western support for homosexuality

By **CARA ANNA** and **RODNEY MUHUMUZA**  
Associated Press

**NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)** — Iran's president on a rare visit to Africa on Wednesday sharply criticized Western nations' support for homosexuality as one of the "dirtiest" episodes of human history.

President Ebrahim Raisi spoke in Uganda, which recently passed anti-gay legislation prescribing the death penalty for "aggravated homosexuality," to widespread international condemnation.

"I believe that this issue, and these strong attacks by the West against the establishment of families and against the culture of the nations, is another area of cooperation for Iran and Uganda," Raisi said after a private meeting with Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni.

"The Western countries try to identify homosexuality as an index of civilization, while this is one of the dirtiest things which have been done in human history," Raisi said.

The African visit is the first by an Iranian leader in more than a decade as the country, which is under heavy U.S. economic sanctions, seeks more partnerships around the world. Raisi is also visiting Zimbabwe.



Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi speaks at a joint press conference after meeting with Kenya's President William Ruto at State House in Nairobi, Kenya Wednesday, July 12, 2023.

Associated Press

By emphasizing conservatism and anti-colonialism in his Uganda remarks, he appeared ready to bond with African countries on more than purely economic grounds.

At his first stop in Kenya, Iran's leader called Africa a "continent of opportunities" and a great platform for Iranian products. "None of us is satisfied with the current volume of trade," he said.

Raisi specifically mentioned Africa's mineral resources and Iran's petrochemical experience, but the mem-

oranda of understanding signed by Iran and Kenya appeared not to address either one. Instead, they focused on information, communication and technology; fisheries; animal health and livestock production and investment promotion. Kenyan President William Ruto called Iran a "critical strategic partner" and "global innovation powerhouse." Tea accounts for the bulk of Kenya's exports to Iran, but Ruto expressed interest in expanding the range of agricultural exports. Iran intends to set up

a manufacturing plant for Iranian vehicles in Kenya's port city of Mombasa, Ruto added.

Raisi's Africa visit is meant to "promote economic diplomacy, strengthen political relations with friendly and aligned countries, and diversify the export destinations," Iran's foreign ministry said in a statement.

Last month, Iran's leader made his first visit to Latin America, stopping in Venezuela, Cuba and Nicaragua. In March, Iran and Saudi Arabia agreed to re-establish diplomatic ties in

a major diplomatic breakthrough.

Iran is in a growing standoff with Western nations over its nuclear program, which has made major advances in the five years since then-U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew his country from an international agreement that restricted it. Trump also restored sanctions on Iran that have contributed to a severe economic crisis. The U.S. last month accused Iran of providing Russia with materials to build a drone manufacturing plant as Moscow seeks weaponry for its ongoing invasion of Ukraine. Iran has said it provided drones to Russia before the start of the war but not since.

Kenya is East Africa's economic hub and an ally of the U.S., with President Joe Biden's wife, Jill, visiting the country early this year. Last year, the U.S. and Kenya signed a memorandum of understanding on "strategic civil nuclear cooperation." Kenya has expressed interest in using nuclear power for energy production. Kenya is struggling with debt and rising cost of living, with more deadly protests on Wednesday. Uganda's president, a U.S. ally on security matters, has previously voiced support for Iran's nuclear program. □

## Kerry to visit Beijing for climate talks amid efforts to revive relations between US and China

**BEIJING (AP)** — U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry will travel to Beijing next week to discuss strategies for limiting global warming, amid a push by the world's two largest economies to reengage on multiple issues following a sharp decline in contacts.

Kerry's office said he will arrive Sunday and depart July 19. He is due to meet with his counterpart Xie Zhenhua, with whom he has established a strong working relationship. "During meetings with PRC officials, Secretary Kerry aims to engage with the PRC on addressing the climate crisis, including with respect to increasing implementation and ambition and promoting a successful COP28," Kerry's office said in a press release, referring to China's formal title, the People's Republic of China, and the UN Climate Change Conference scheduled to be held in the United Arab Emirates in November and December.

Kerry's visit comes on the heels of one by Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, who appealed to China on Saturday for cooperation on climate change and other global challenges and not to let disagreements about trade and other irritants derail relations. In a meeting with her Chinese counterpart, Vice Premier He Lifeng, Yellen defended U.S. restrictions on technology exports that rankle Beijing. She said the two governments shouldn't let such disagreements disrupt thriving economic and financial relations. □



John Kerry, United States Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, speaks after a news conference given by China's Special Envoy for Climate Change Xie Zhenhua at the COP26 U.N. Climate Summit in Glasgow, Scotland, on Nov. 10, 2021.

Associated Press





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## Watch out for Blue Crab Migration near Savaneta



(Oranjestad)—The department of nature & environment in Aruba are urging motorists to watch out for blue crabs crossing the road in Pos Chiquito to make their way to the ocean.

They added a new bright yellow road sign with "Land Crab Crossing" to remind people to be cautious while driving on the highway on Pos Chiquito with blue crabs. Blue crabs in Aruba are found plenty near the beach areas, especially in Pos Chiquito, because of the amount of mangroves. They are known to dig holes deep

in the beach sand in seek of humidity.

The diet of blue crabs consists of decomposed trees, insects, scorpions and rest of dead animals.

Nesting season for blue crabs is between June & July.

Why protect blue crabs?

Because they are of high value for the ecology of the mangroves. Conserving the blue crabs is crucial for the preservation of mangroves.

Watch out for crossing blue crabs on the highway near Pos Chiquito & Santo Largo. □

## Food culture in Aruba

(Oranjestad) - Like many other cultures, an important aspect of the Aruban cultural identity is our connection to food and food traditions. The local food traditions consist of a melting pot of different cultural and religious eating habits and dishes.

### Breakfast, lunch and dinner

The routine of breakfast, lunch and dinner on the island is one that does not completely follow a European or American routine, despite the major influences from these parts of the world on our culture and way of living. When it comes to the three important meals of the day, most of the Aruban population follows a Latin-American influenced routine.

### Breakfast

Breakfast in Aruba is quite simple: a cup of coffee or tea, some bread, and sometimes an egg. Sometimes, due to the need of a quick "to-go" breakfast, you may also find many snack trucks and cafes that sell sandwiches, pastechis (meat pie), arepas and

empanadas early in the morning.

### Main Meal

The main meal is typically eaten in most households around noon or in the afternoon. This can consist of meat, fish, and chicken—stewed or fried—with funchi (polenta) or rice with stewed vegetables. Often, fried or boiled plantain or pan bati (Aruban pancake) is included. Stews are a staple in Aruban cuisine and can be largely influenced by Latin-American and Latin/Afro-Caribbean Stews. Some of the more unique stews and soups from the ABC Islands\* include sopi di bonchi cora (red kidney bean soup with pig tail), sopi mondongo (tripe soup), carni stoba (beef stew), comcomber stoba (West Indian gherkin stew) and much more.

### Dinner Time

Dinner time can vary significantly from household to household. Unlike the U.S. or in Europe, dinner time typically does not consist of a whole (warm) meal. Instead, the evening "meal"

can typically consist of something lighter, like a sandwich, though it is not uncommon to see leftovers from the main meal reheated and eaten again. Tea and coffee are often also served with the evening snack.

### (Religious) Holidays

Christmas is probably the biggest global holiday, and every culture has its own spin on what their Christmas cuisine entails. In Aruba, our Christmas cuisine is again largely based on Latin-American influences, most notably from Venezuela. Ayacas and the famous pan di ham\* are two crucial holiday dishes, along with stuffed turkey, roasted glazed ham topped with pineapples, arroz con pollo (rice and chicken) and potato salad, among other items. Traditional drinks include ponche crema (Aruban eggnog), chuculati pinda (hot chocolate with peanut butter), and home-made fruit punch. Desserts include, bolo di pistachio (pistachio cake), bolo di cashupete (cashew cake), quesillo (flan), bolo preto



(dark fruit cake), drigidek (gingerbread), pan boyo (bread cake) and more.

until late at night—offering tasty and filling snacks post night-life fun.

Snacks and tasty delights  
Besides meals and dishes that are eaten on the dinner table, Aruba also has a food tradition that includes snacks and other tasty delights that you may easily find around the island. These include, Saco\*, basket, pastechi, kroket, deditos, Johnny cake and more. These snacks are usually sold at local snack trucks and cafes, often located on the side of the road. In the area of Tanki Leendert and Tanki flip, for example, there are many of these trucks parked on the side of the road and often open

\*ABC Islands: Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao

\*Pan di ham: Derived from the Venezuelan Pan de Jamon (rolled up bread with ham, raisins and olives)

\*Saco: Saco literally means "bag". Saco contains fried potatoes, plantains, chicken (and ribs) and a Johnny cake, served in a paper bag.

Source: Voeding, voedingsgewoonten en gerechten op Aruba (Nutrition, Food Traditions and Dishes on Aruba) by Biblioteca Nacional Aruba. □





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## Delphi Watersports Wins 2023 Viator Experience Award

### *“Catamaran Dolphin Snorkeling Cruise: Open bar, Light Lunch” Recognized Among Best in Top 20 for the Caribbean, Based on Exceptional Ratings & Reviews*



**Oranjestad – Delphi Watersports announced it has been recognized as a Viator Experience Award winner for “Top 20 Best in Experience” for the Caribbean region. Despite a challenging few years for the travel industry, Delphi Watersports stood out to travelers and provided an exceptional experience.**

“We, at Delphi Watersports, are absolutely thrilled and deeply honored to have received the prestigious Viator Experience Award for our phenomenal catamaran Dolphin snorkeling cruise. This is a truly momentous achievement, and we couldn't be prouder of our team for their unwavering dedication and hard work.

We firmly believe that our personalized, friendly service coupled with our commitment to our customers' safety has played a significant role in making our catamaran Dolphin snorkeling cruise such a resounding success. Our unique features and innovative approach have also contributed to its massive popularity. But, we believe that the real secret to our success story lies in the exceptional professionalism, hospitality, and friendliness of our staff. They go above and beyond to ensure that every single guest who steps aboard our catamaran feels welcomed and valued, creating an unparalleled experience that is unmatched in the industry.

In addition, we must acknowledge the incredible support of our repeat guests who have played a crucial role in making this achievement possible. Their loyalty and enthusiasm for our catamaran Dolphin snorkeling cruise have been a driving force behind our success, and we are incredibly grateful for their continued patronage and trust in our services.

Their valuable feedback and suggestions have helped us to constantly improve and refine our offerings, ensuring that we are always delivering the best possible experience for our guests. We are immensely

proud of the relationships we have built with our repeat guests and are thrilled to have them as a part of our Delphi Watersports family.

We will continue to strive for excellence in everything we do, from our personalized service to our commitment to safety, to ensure that our guests have an unforgettable time aboard our catamaran Dolphin snorkeling cruise. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this incredible achievement, and we look forward to welcoming you aboard again soon!”

Viator is the world's largest travel experiences marketplace with more than 300,000 bookable tours, activities, and excursions. Now in its second year, the final rankings for the Viator Experience Awards are based on average review ratings, share of bookings with a review, and number of bookings on the Viator platform over a 12-month period (Jan-Dec 2022). Serving as the hallmark of the best experiences to book, this round of Viator Experience Awards recognizes 220 experiences, tours, and activities across 11 geographic regions - ranking the top 20 winners per region.

“No matter where you're from or where you're going, one thing is clear—the hunger for unforgettable travel experiences has never been greater,” said Adam Lawless, Communications Director, Viator. “What you do and see while traveling tends to leave a lasting mark. We're thrilled to have this award program spotlight truly exceptional tours, activities, and excursions from around the world that elevate your travel experience—creating memories you won't soon forget.”

To see traveler reviews and to

book with Delphi Watersports, visit Delphi Watersports - Tripadvisor. You can also follow the conversation on Twitter and Instagram with the hashtag #ViatorExperienceAwards.

#### About Delphi Watersports

We are a family business that has been established on Aruba since 1992, and we have been awarded the TripAdvisor's prestigious Award of Excellence, Hall of Fame Award, Travelers Choice Award and Experience Award during the past 9 consecutive years.

We offer an unsurpassable variety of both water sports and activities available on Aruba, specialized in giving excellent service to individuals, couples, families, groups and all kinds of events. We make sure that our customers have an unforgettable vacation experience.

Delphi Watersports. Book with us now and Experience the Difference!

#### About Viator

Viator, a TripAdvisor company, makes it easy to find and book unforgettable tours, activities, and excursions around the world. With more than 300,000 experiences to choose from there's always something new to discover, both near and far from home.

Your time off is precious so we focus tirelessly on quality, offering everything from simple tours to extreme adventures (and all the niche, interesting stuff in between). With ultimate flexibility, award-winning customer support, and millions of traveler reviews, you can truly do more with Viator.

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## Visit the island's hidden natural pools

(Oranjestad)—Amongst the countless beaches surrounding the island that are well-known and frequently visited, there are an additional two “hidden” natural pools that are situated in the northern coast of the island, two ideal stops in your tour itinerary.

### Conchi (Natural Pool)

For many years, Conchi was the only natural pool that we had on the island. Located in the Arikok National Park, near Boca Keto and the Daimari Ranch, Conchi—also known “Cura di Turtuga (Turtle’s Cove) or just Natural Pool—is reachable with any 4x4 vehicle or by foot if you’re up for a long hike. However, since it is part of the National Park, you must first get permission from park management to enter. You would have to purchase a day pass, and receive a wristband as proof of payment. Once you’ve completed that,

you are set!

If you decide to hike from the entrance of the Arikok National Park, this is also possible: do bring plenty of protective clothing and enough water and food—it could take you up to three hours to hike there!

However, when you eventually do get there, you will be greeted with crystal blue water surrounded by a natural rock formation that protects you from the wild waves on the other side. Though the pool is located on the northern side of the island (where the sea is largely rough and largely no suitable for swimming), the pool itself is very calm. It’s also relatively deep, and you can climb up the rocks and jump in!

### Cave Pool

This relatively new pool appeared just a few years ago, when a part of the

dried up coral floor broke off and created a partition between the ocean and what is now the natural pool that is hidden there. Because it’s still so new, there is no official name for it, but most people just call it the cave pool.

Just like the Conchi, the new natural pool is situated on the northern coast of Aruba. However, this pool is much easier to reach with any type of vehicle, and there is no hiking needed. This spot has also become a regular stop for touring visitors.

When you get there, maybe you won’t be able to spot the pool immediately, because you will probably notice the moon-shaped lagoon where wild northern waves crash into each other. Sounds scary, but if you look down on your right, you’ll see a calm, crystal blue little pool in the cor-



ner. To get there, you have to climb down some stairs. Be careful when climbing down and follow the instructions of your tour guide if you have one.

And just like Conchi, this

pool also has a jumping spot, and a rope to climb back up the boulder.

Picture of cave pool is credited to RockaBeach Tours

## Aruba to me

**ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.**

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is ..... Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: [news@arubatoday.com](mailto:news@arubatoday.com) and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation. Last but not least: check out our website, Insta-

gram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a lovely message from Eduardo and Ada Sotomayor from **San Juan, Puerto Rico**

She wrote to us saying; “Aruba to me is paradise on earth . We have visited this happy island for the last 35 years with my kids, my parents, my cousins and friends and we are now celebrating our 54th wedding anniversary . We really love ARUBA.”

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers!







## Episode 19 A Nobel native heart

**Native Aruban compassion story. What it meant to be a slave in Aruba?**

**In these stories of Curacao and the Dutch Colonies we encounter this amazing story which starts in the Mediterranean in the year 1762 and ends in Aruba 1765.**

It was in the year of 1763 that Fiscal Miguel Alvarez, a religious chief appointed by the Pope and of the Roman Catholic Church, as the one person responsible for the life and faith of Aruba's Amerindian souls and also as the care taker and authority of the Church "Queen of the Holiest Rosary of Alto Vista of Aruba". This well to-do Amerindian of the Caquetios, a merchant and business man sailed a lot between the islands and the mainland.

During one of these trips to Curacao, approaching the plaza where all the slaves normally would be lined up, there he was, standing and staring at this noisy docking ship that had just arrived full of slaves at the port in Willemstad. He stood there and could not believe his eyes to see how cruel other human beings were treated and felt great compassion for one of them in particular. One who was wounded and that gave the impression to be educated and seemed to be a civilized person. Aruba had always treated those who were considered to be slaves very well.

Miguel decided to try to convince the slave trader to sell him the slave for peanuts mentioning his dire conditions. So he opens his money pouch he carries on his waist, took out two tiny pieces of gold, a small and

a bigger one and returns his pouch behind his poncho. He plays a little with the small nuggets in his hand like shaking a maraca and say "cuateronza," with this I will save this man's life. Now he thought, he still had to convince the master of the slaves that the slave he wanted to buy did not have much more time to live, and yes: four ounces of gold did the job.

Once that Mr. Alvarez got him, he immediately took him over to a friend's house in Curacao; there they took

care of him for a week until the slave was appearing better in order to sail over to Aruba.

When Alvarez and his slave arrived at Tara Tata beach that they called Playa, people congratulated him for the good purchase the Fiscal had made, but Miguel told them that he had not bought that man, that he had only given them money so that the man could get his freedom.



The inhabitants of Aruba saw that the slave, the man had done the sign of the holy cross the same way they do it themselves and thought he must be a good person. The name of that freed slave was Crisostomo and so little by little Crisostomo was getting used to his new reality of life. Miguel Alvarez had a room build especially for him in the town of Noord, close to his own house.

As time passes by he began to learn the Spanish language, since Arawakan was too difficult and it became a secret language that was not shared with foreigners any more. Now he was gaining the ability to tell something about his previous life in Spanish.

Crisostomo answered the people that asked him where he was originally from and that he came from Algeria a country

in North Africa and that it bordered the Mediterranean Sea and that his parents died when he was very young that they were Christians and that he had received a Catholic education.

After a year Aruba received the visit of Father Pedro Rodriguez. All the nobles and principal petitioners of Noord gathered at the house of Fiscal Miguel Alvarez. There, Father Rodriguez who traveled from Caracas could get some information from Crisostomo. He told the curious that he has been married to a good woman named Elena Petronilia and lived happily in Algeria for 14 years. They had five children but four of them died when they were very young, they were baptized and only one Anastacio was alive when tragedy struck...□

**Source; Island Insight column by Etnia Nativa.**





# Aruba's cultural and literary development: Then and now

(Oranjestad)—The Aruban culture has seen many substantial developments over the course of a century. With the introduction of the Lago Refinery at the turn of the 20th century, followed by the breakout of the Second World War and the general incentive for political independence during the mid-century, a cultural identity on the island began to take form and have since developed through international and local influences.

In the pre-industrial era of the 19th century, much could not be said about a cultural identity on the island. Still being a part of a Dutch colonial territory at the same, as well as not having political or economic autonomy (Curacao was the center of commerce, cultural life, and political management of the Netherland Antilles at the time), the small population of Aruba consisted mostly of farmers and fishermen, tending to their crops and their cattle, or going out to fish to provide for their family. As Quito Nicolaas states in his article *Historia di Literatura Arubiano: E Bida Cultural* (Literary History of Aruba: Cultural Life), "during the pre-industrial period, there were no significant economic activity that could have created a cultural ambience, with only one way to generate profit at the time for the subsistence of Aruban families."



It wasn't until the introduction of the Lago Refinery in San Nicolas in 1928, that the island saw a small boom in cultural manifestations and entertainment, as farmers left the 'cunucu' (country) life to work in the refinery, which resulted in Aruba acquiring a different economic pillar. Before this, entertainment and cultural manifestations were mostly experiences by local parishes and the island's elite,

who often partook in cultural and entertaining activities around the island, like going to the movie theater or coming together to share poetry on Sundays after church.

## Literary life

Throughout the 19th century and up until the 1940s, there were also not much trace of a cultural climate for the cultural-literary sector on the island. Primary

education was introduced on the island mid-19th century, followed by secondary and higher education around the late 30's and 40's. It wasn't until the 1950s, with the introduction of the E.R.N.A agreement in 1951 and the signing of the Statute in 1954, which allowed more space for and control over the economic and cultural development of Aruba, that the literary life on the island began to grow substantially compared to decades before. This was in response to local institutions established in the 1940s for cultural and literary growth on the island, but that did not yet capture the attention of the general public. The 1950 brought with it a boom of literary production on the island, like those of V.S. Piterella, as well as migrant authors José Ramón Vicioso y Rings William Rufus, who have also contributed to the literary development on the island. The literary movement was further promoted by local broadcasters Voz di Aruba and Radio Kelkboom, with their regular broadcast of literary works.

The 50s and 60s also saw the influence of international cultures, especially that of the United States. During this time, because of international influences as well as the continued prosperity of the oil refinery, cultural traditions in Aruba began to really take form and become widespread, as different worldly and local concepts were introduced in the Aruban society. With the establishment of local television broadcast station Tele-Aruba in 1963,

and with time and possibilities, local programs such as "Nos Tera" ("Our Land") started to pay more attention to the Aruban culture and worked to form a cultural consciousness in the community. The 1960s also saw the rise of local authors and artists, who were more comfortable in producing works in our native tongue, Papiamentu, but who also produced works in Spanish, English and Dutch. This new phenomenon was in response to the interaction between economic growth, individual prosperity, cultural life and literary expression.

## The 21st century

Nowadays, international influence on our culture is still prevalent, especially those from Latin America, the United States and The Netherlands. Nevertheless, there also exists a strong cultural identity and traditions that are exclusive to the Aruban culture, often manifesting during traditional celebrations, like Dia di San Juan/ Dera Gai (St. John's Day), Dia di Himno y Bandera (National Hymn and Flag Day), Camping during Easter and much more. With the surge of social media in the last decade, artistic voices, especially those of the younger generation, has become even more prevalent and easily accessible to the community of Aruba through online platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. □

Source: *Historia di Literatura Arubiano: E Bida Cultural* by J.R. "Quito" Nicolaas





# CROSSWORD

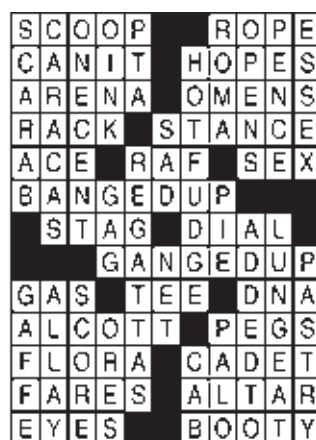
By THOMAS JOSEPH

## ACROSS

- 1 Pool fill
- 6 Asimov forte
- 11 Mindful
- 12 Donut-shaped
- 13 Freezing
- 14 Speak
- 15 "The Apartment" star
- 17 Before today
- 19 Snaky swimmer
- 20 Spree
- 23 Home to Duke
- 25 Band sample
- 26 Custom
- 28 Singer Burl
- 29 Forking over
- 30 Pitch's kin
- 31 Hotel feature
- 32 Pindar work
- 33 Soap opera
- 35 Poisonous
- 38 Gold-loving king
- 41 Bold way to solve cross-words
- 42 Game setting
- 43 Clamorous

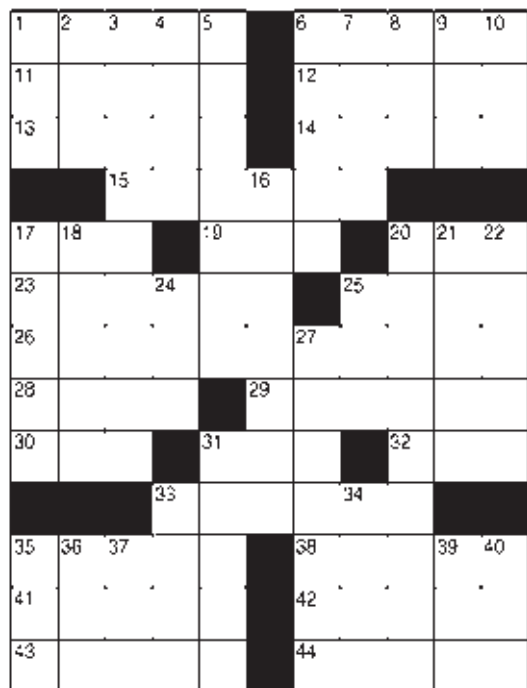
## DOWN

- 1 Funny fellow
- 2 Really impress
- 3 Tough challenge
- 4 Buffalo's lake
- 5 Carnivore's craving
- 6 Bar seat
- 7 Hokey stuff
- 8 Lyricist Gershwin
- 9 In shape
- 10 Bar rocks
- 16 Jotting spot
- 17 Let on



## Yesterday's answer

- 18 Tropical fruit
- 20 Force studiers
- 21 Improve in a way
- 22 Canyon
- 24 "— a Rebel"
- 25 Parched
- 27 Crew member
- 31 Baseball's Dent
- 33 Confession list
- 34 Cork's country
- 35 Light metal
- 36 Lennon's love
- 37 Clock
- 39 Plus
- 40 Utter



7-13

AXYDI.BAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

7-13

## CRYPTOQUOTE

DIMSC MV SIQMEI SCU DMZVS

VSUX UTUE PCUE BFK NFE'S

VUU SCU PCFOU VSIMZGIVU.

— RIZSME OKSCUZ QMEL. HZ.

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: OUR PHONES HAVE CREATED WHAT I LIKE TO CALL SADD SOCIAL ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER. — DAN LEVY

# Pioneering Anchor Brewing Co. to halt operations after 127 years

By MICHELLE CHAPMAN  
AP Business Writer

San Francisco's 127-year-old Anchor Brewing Co. will shut down and liquidate after years of declining sales, citing tough economic conditions.

Anchor was trailblazer in the U.S., brewing craft beers in the 1970s when most Americans were loyal to a handful of major brands. Its unique brewing techniques ignited demand beyond the city borders of San Francisco and it quickly became a sought-after prize by beer geeks everywhere. In recent years, however, brewers have faced increasing difficulty turning a profit with a proliferation of canned cocktails, crafted drinks, spirits and wines ding beer sales. Lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic pressured brewers further.



In this 2004 file photo, a number of artisan beers made at Anchor Brewing Co. are displayed in San Francisco.

Associated Press

Last year, overall beer sales volume slid 3.1% in the U.S., according to the Brewers Association. Craft brewer sales volume ticked 0.1% higher during the period, but imports are rising.

"We recognize the importance and historic significance of Anchor to San Francisco and to the craft

brewing industry, but the impacts of the pandemic, inflation, especially in San Francisco, and a highly competitive market left the company with no option but to make this sad decision to cease operations," said brewery spokesperson Sam Singer in a written statement Wednesday. □

# Domino's signs deal with Uber Eats in a bid to make more dough

By DEE-ANN DURBIN  
AP Business Writer

If you can't beat them, join them.

In a major reversal, Domino's Pizza said Wednesday

it's partnering with Uber Eats to make deliveries in the U.S. and 27 international markets. While franchisees in a handful of international markets like the Neth-

erlands have been working with third-party apps for years, Domino's has long said that partnering with delivery companies didn't make economic sense in its 6,600 U.S. stores.

Under the agreement, uniformed Domino's drivers will still make the deliveries that customers order via Uber Eats, and Uber Eats will share data with Domino's on delivery efficiency and incremental sales.

Ann Arbor, Michigan-based Domino's wouldn't say what percentage Uber Eats will take from each order. □



A Domino's Pizza sign hangs above a location in Hialeah, Fla., Oct. 27, 2016.

Associated Press

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## Film review: Musical theater meets mockumentary in 'Theater Camp'

By **JAKE COYLE**  
AP Film Writer

Among the low-hanging fruits of satire, sleepaway theater camps would dangle about as low as social-media influencers and Def Leppard cover bands. But "Theater Camp," a new comedy by Molly Gordon and Nick Lieberman, energetically wades into the kind of mockumentary territory Christopher Guest would approve of. The spirit of "Best in Show" and "Waiting for Guffman" is often present, for better and worse, in Gordon and Lieberman's film, which first debuted at Sundance earlier this year.

But theirs is a much more earnest, loving lampoon, made by a group of friends with obvious affection for musical theater. Gordon and Lieberman co-wrote the script with Ben Platt and Noah Galvin, expanding their 2020 18-minute short. The result is something too tame for rich parody, but knowing enough to be kind of sweet. "Theater Camp," at least, has the song and dance part down pat. The upstate New York



This image released by Searchlight Pictures shows a scene from "Theater Camp." Associated Press

camp of AdirondACTS has been pluckily kept running for years by its founder, Joan (Amy Sedaris). She's intended to be the main character of a documentary on the camp. But in the opening moments of the film, while Joan and manager Rita (Caroline Aaron) are out recruiting campers, she's knocked into a coma by strobe lights in a middle school production of "Bye Bye Birdie." It's a funny enough gag but a crushing blow to the

film. Taking Amy Sedaris off screen in a mockumentary that might have starred her is like killing Fred Astaire off in the first number. You just don't do it. So who are our characters instead? Joan's son, Troy (Jimmy Tatro), comes in to run the camp. He's pretty much their worst nightmare: a social media-promoting finance bro who always avoided his mother's camp because, he says, he was busy doing "dope (expletive)" instead. When Troy opens a new

summer season, plenty of eyerolls follow especially from Amos (Platt), the head of drama, and his close friend and collaborator Rebecca-Diane (Gordon). They nevertheless forge ahead with the summer's programs, including "The Crucible Jr.," an "immersive" "Cats" and their original piece, "Joan, Still." Life at the camp gets underway while the threat of foreclosure lurks and a more well-to-do rival camp looks to take over. The in-

side jokes fly fast and frequent. There's a group of finger-snapping "Fosse kids," a designated "Meryl Day," bedtime stories where the villain is non-union and exaggerated stakes on stage. "Joan, Still" is said to be such an ambitious work of theater that Amos promises its child cast: "This will break you." All of this clever but too expected to be especially funny. The movie, the directorial debut for Gordon and Lieberman, loosely bounces between a large cast of characters, who know their parts well maybe too well. They include the dancing instructor Clive (Nathan Lee Graham), the costume designer Gigi (Owen Thiele) and Galvin's tech director with secret dreams of performing. One notable standout is "The Bear" breakout Ayo Edebiri as a local hire who lied on her resume; her scenes have a lively unpredictability. But if "Theater Camp" struggles to find its footing, "Joan, Still" leads it to a surprisingly terrific finale. By then, Tatro has turned his one-note caricature into an endearing ally. □



Bad Bunny speaks at the Sony Pictures Entertainment presentation at CinemaCon 2022 in Las Vegas on April 25, 2022. Associated Press

By **MARIA SHERMAN**  
AP Music Writer

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — Is non-English language music the future of the music business? Perhaps. The global music industry surpassed 1 trillion streams

at the fastest pace, ever, in a calendar year, Luminate's 2023 Midyear Report has found. The number was reached in three months, a full month faster than 2022. Global streams are also up 30.8% from last year, reflect-

## Music streams for 2023 hit 1 trillion in record time

tive of an increasingly international music marketplace. Additionally, Luminate found that two in five or 40% of U.S. music listeners enjoy music in a non-English language. And a whopping 69% of U.S. music listeners enjoy music from artists originating outside of the U.S. According to the report, Spanish, French, Japanese, Korean, Italian, German, and Arabic are the most popular languages for non-Anglophonic music among U.S. music listeners, with Latin genres and K-pop leading the charge. "Specifically, our streaming data shows that Span-

ish and Korean language music are the most popular when taking a look at the top 10,000 most streamed songs (audio and video combined) during the first half of 2023," says Jaime Marconette, Luminate's senior director of music insights and industry relations. "Furthermore, Spanish-language music's share of that top 10,000 has grown 3.6% since 2021, while English-language music's share has dropped 4.2% in that same time," he says. That is reflected in Luminate's 2023 Midyear Top Albums chart, where Bad Bunny's spring 2022 album "Un Verano Sin Ti" still breaks the top 10 a year later (the

chart factors in a combination of album sales, on-demand audio/visual sales, and digital track sales). When "top albums" are defined by physical and digital sales exclusively, K-pop dominates, taking up six of the top 10 spots. "K-pop fans are, unsurprisingly, some of the most enthusiastic fans across physical formats," Marconette says. Luminate found that K-pop fans are 69% more likely to purchase vinyl and 46% more likely to purchase CDs than the average U.S. music listener in the next 12 months. One in four K-pop fans has purchased a cassette in the last 12 months. □



# Chris Eubanks' magical Wimbledon ends against Daniil Medvedev

By HOWARD FENDRICH

AP Tennis Writer

WIMBLEDON, England (AP)

— Chris Eubanks woke up Wednesday morning ahead of playing for a berth in the final four at Wimbledon against 2021 U.S. Open champion Daniil Medvedev and, first thing, like so many of us, reached for his phone to see what the buzz was about on Twitter.

"It was just constant me," Eubanks said. "I was just like, 'This is so weird.' I looked at it. I was like, 'Man, I'm really about to play a Grand Slam quarterfinal today. This is cool.'"

He took less than 10 minutes to let that sink in, then, as the 27-year-old American who captivated the crowds at the All England Club and many folks back home put it, "was able to lock back in." And so he pushed Medvedev the distance, taking a two-sets-to-one lead before running out of aces and energy. Basking in the roars from the stands at No. 1 Court, the unseeded Eubanks came within four points of winning to extend his deepest run, by far, at a major tournament before Medvedev pulled away for a 6-4, 1-6, 4-6, 7-6 (4), 6-1 victory to reach the Wimbledon semifinals for the first time. "It's like his level elevated into the fifth," Eubanks said, "where I had a little bit of a



Christopher Eubanks of the US at the net during his men's singles match against Russia's Daniil Medvedev on day ten of the Wimbledon tennis championships in London, Wednesday, July 12, 2023.

Associated Press

drop."

If Medvedev was unsteady for a bit, perhaps distracted by a back-and-forth with the chair umpire over a stray ball that headed toward the stands, he gathered himself well.

"Happy that I managed to put myself back together. There was a moment in the match I started just losing kind of everything the focus, the momentum of the match," said the No. 3-seeded Medvedev, who will face No. 1 Carlos Alcaraz in the semifinals on Friday. "When I started losing it, I was like, 'All right,

what's happening? Why is it happening like this?'"

Alcaraz's 7-6 (3), 6-4, 6-4 victory over No. 6 Holger Rune at Centre Court was the first men's quarterfinal at Wimbledon in the Open era, which dates to 1968, with two players who are not yet 21. Both Spain's Alcaraz, who won last year's U.S. Open, and Denmark's Rune are 20.

When Alcaraz smacked a backhand return winner to seal the first set, he threw his head back and screamed. He paused for a second and screamed again. He strutted to the

sideline, head held high, and yelled, then got to the sideline and yelled "Vamos! Vamos!"

"It was nerves. Tension. It was everything," Alcaraz explained later.

In the women's quarterfinals, Ons Jabeur eliminated defending champion Elena Rybakina 6-7 (5), 6-4, 6-1 in a rematch of last year's title match, and reigning Australian Open champion Aryna Sabalenka defeated No. 25 seed Madison Keys 6-2, 6-4.

Jabeur, known more for her spins and slices and variety than her power,

actually opted for trading big swings with Rybakina, whose game is built that way.

"If you want to hit hard," Jabeur said, "I'm ready to hit hard, too."

No. 6 Jabeur plays No. 2 Sabalenka on Thursday, when the other semifinal will be between unseeded players Elna Svitolina and Marketa Vondrousova. None of the four remaining women has won Wimbledon; Sabalenka is the only one who already owns a major trophy. Sabalenka, who is from Belarus, and Medvedev, who is from Russia, were banned from the All England Club a year ago, along with every player representing those two countries, over the invasion of Ukraine. The war continues, but Russians and Belarusians were allowed back this time.

If Alcaraz's victory was altered by the first-set tiebreaker "He gained more confidence from that set; I didn't," Rune said Medvedev's started to tilt midway through the fourth-set tiebreaker.

Eubanks put a forehand in a corner that drew a netted backhand from Medvedev, making it 3-all. Many in the seats rose, cheering wildly, and Eubanks pumped his right fist, staring toward the support. "The fans," he would say afterward, "definitely got their money's worth." □

# Jimmie Johnson, Chad Knaus nominated for NASCAR Hall of Fame

By The Associated Press

Seven-time Cup Series champion Jimmie Johnson and his former crew chief of the No. 48 Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet Chad Knaus headline a list of 15 nominees for the NASCAR Hall of Fame Class of 2024. There are 10 nominees on the modern era ballot and five on the pioneer ballot, which is designed to honor those whose careers began more than 60 years ago. Two modern era candidates and one pioneer candidate will be selected for the Hall of Fame when

the 61-person committee meets on Aug. 2.

Together, Johnson and Knaus won Cup titles in 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2013 and 2016. Johnson's seven titles as a driver tie him with Dale Earnhardt and Richard Petty for the most in NASCAR history.

Joining Johnson and Knaus on the modern era ballot are former drivers Carl Edwards, Neil Bonnett, Jeff Burton, Ricky Rudd, Harry Gant, Tim Brewer, Harry Hyde and Larry Phillips.

Donnie Allison, an original member of the fan-favorite

Alabama Gang, will be on the pioneer ballot for the first time, along with fellow drivers AJ Foyt and Sam Ard, car builder Banjo Matthews and car owner Ralph Moody.

Longtime NASCAR executive Les Richter joins the Landmark Award ballot for the first time after being on the Hall of Fame ballot three times before the award was created.

The Landmark Award honors those who made significant contributions to the growth and esteem of NASCAR. □



Jimmie Johnson (48) celebrates his win in a NASCAR Sprint Cup Series auto race at Texas Motor Speedway Sunday, Nov. 4, 2012, in Fort Worth.

Associated Press



# Philipsen secures 4th sprint win at Tour de France

**MOULINS, France (AP) —**

Jasper Philipsen is in a class of his own when it comes to sprinting at the Tour de France. He is so strong that even when the teammate in charge of setting him up is not there, he still wins in the end.

The Belgian sprinter posted his fourth stage win at this year's Tour de France on Wednesday, taking his career tally to six.

"It's been an incredible Tour so far," Philipsen said after outclassing the field. "I can't realize how good it is all going, so I'm super proud and really happy with my shape.

And also, to get through the final without problems is also a big challenge, and we managed to do it four times, so I'm super happy."



Belgium's Jasper Philipsen celebrates his fourth stage victory as he crosses the finish line ahead of Netherlands' Dylan Groenewegen, just behind Philipsen, and Germany's Phil Bauhaus, left, as he crosses the finish line to win the eleventh stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 180 kilometers (112 miles) with start in Clermont-Ferrand and finish in Moulins, France, Wednesday, July 12, 2023.

Associated Press

There were no major changes in the general classification: Jonas Vingegaard kept his 17-second lead over two-time champion Tadej Pogacar. Jai Hindley

remained in third place, 2 minutes, 40 seconds off the pace.

Philipsen, who rides for Alpecin-Deceuninck, had been perfectly guided by his leadout man Mathieu van der Poel in his three previous stage wins. Left on his own this time, he perfectly timed his move and once again proved strongest in the frenetic last kilometer of the 180-kilometer (112 miles) Stage 11 from Clermont-Ferrand to Moulins in central France.

Philipsen has lost just one of the five mass sprints that took place at this year's Tour when Mad Pedersen won Stage 8.

With van der Poel not taking part in Wednesday's sprint, Philipsen navigated his way through traffic at an average speed of 65.6 kmh (40.8 mph) in the last kilometer to join Mark Cavendish as the only active rider with at least four stage wins in a single Tour edition. Cavendish crashed out of the race last week. After Alexander Kristoff launched the sprint, Dylan Groenewegen countered with Philipsen on his wheel.

The Belgian's power was too much to handle for Groenewegen, who had to be content with a runner-up finish. Phil Bauhaus completed the stage podium.

"I had to find my wheel a little bit, and it's also finding the space, and it's hectic and dangerous for crashing, but I'm happy I could find a good wheel Groenewegen in the end, he opened up early, and I could go over," Philipsen summed up.

Following a day of furious racing in hot weather that took a toll on the peloton, Andrey Amador moved to the front immediately after the start of the stage but quickly noticed there were not a lot of riders interested in jumping into a break.

Amador for a while rode only a few meters ahead of the bunch before Matis Louvel and Daniel Oss joined his effort as they broke away without facing resistance from the peloton. □



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